

VZCZCXRO7277  
RR RUEHLMC  
DE RUEHRB #0402/01 0621620  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 031620Z MAR 06  
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2987  
INFO RUEHCL/AMCONSUL CASABLANCA 1339  
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS 3778  
RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS 8662  
RUEHNK/AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT 3015  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 4033  
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 1425  
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID 5368  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 2802  
RUEATRS/DEPTTREAS WASHDC  
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC  
RUEHC/DEPT OF LABOR WASHDC  
RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHDC 0859  
RUEAORC/USCBP WASHINGTON DC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION WASHINGTON DC  
RHMCSUU/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC  
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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 RABAT 000402

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STATE PASS USTR FOR DOUG BELL  
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PARIS FOR ZEYA  
LONDON FOR TSOU  
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TAGS: [ECON](#) [EFIS](#) [FAIR](#) [EINV](#) [ECPS](#) [MO](#)  
SUBJECT: MOROCCO ECONOMIC HIGHLIGHTS

REF A: 05 Rabat 1693

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Fishing for \$400 million  
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¶1. Fishing, which employs nearly one in ten Moroccans, brought in nearly \$400 million in 2005, a 12 percent increase over the previous year. The highest growth came from catches brought into the ports of Tan Tan in southern Morocco and Laayoune, in the Western Sahara.

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Bull Run  
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¶2. The Casablanca stock exchange is up over 30 percent since the start of the year, leaving analysts and investors wondering how sustainable the rally will prove to be. Both major indexes, the Moroccan All Shares Index (MASI), a free-floating index that includes all 55 stocks on the exchange, and the Moroccan Most Active Shares Index (MADEX), which includes only the 20 most traded stocks, have jumped 30 percent. The exchange's market capitalization is now up to \$36 billion, up from \$27 billion at the end of 2005. Many analysts point to a massive inflow of petrodollars from the Gulf as the cause.

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Easier to Jet from Marrakech to Paris, London  
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13. Britain's EasyJet announced that starting in July it will offer direct daily service from London Gatwick to Marrakech, becoming the first major low-fare carrier to fly between the two cities. Meanwhile, new Moroccan low-cost carrier Jet4You completed its first commercial flight on Feb. 27 from Paris to Marrakech. The new airline will fly daily from Paris Orly to Marrakech, and twice weekly from Orly to Fez and Agadir.

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U.S. Firm Bets on Tourism  
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14. A consortium led by U.S. investment firm Colony Capital won a call for bids launched by the Ministry of Tourism to develop the beach resort at Taghazout, on Morocco's southern Atlantic coast near Agadir. Colony Capital will invest an initial \$220 million to develop the site, and then up to another \$1.1 billion on amenities. The resort will be one of the six stations contemplated under the GOM's "Plan Azur" tourism development program (Ref A), and will have a capacity for 21,000 guests. Work will begin before the end of 2006.

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Maroc Telecom Record Profits  
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15. Legacy telecoms operator Maroc Telecom earned a record 2005 profit of \$635 million, 12 percent higher than in 2004. The company will invest \$36 million this year in a new undersea fiber optic cable linking northern Morocco to the

RABAT 00000402 002 OF 002

south of France, in a bid to boost the infrastructure needed to make the country an attractive destination for call centers.

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Medical Brain Drain  
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16. The national medical doctors union reports that 20 Moroccan physicians leave the country every month to work in countries like France and Canada, mostly seeking higher pay. There is one physician for every 3,000 people in Morocco, well below the WHO-recommended figure of one per 1,000 population.

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Morocco 2014?  
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17. Three large soccer stadiums launched by the GOM during its failed bid to host the World Cup in 2010 are in an advanced state of construction. The stadiums, which cost \$100 million each and will each hold 45,000 people, are being built in Tangier, Marrakech and Agadir. They are financed entirely by the state and will be finished near the end of 2007.